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Learning styles

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Identifying your learning style

What are learning styles?

☐ Learning styles are the different ways people have of taking in and processing or using information.

☐ It is useful to know and understand your own learning style as this can help you learn more effectively and you are likely to find learning easier and quicker.

Different Learning Styles

☐ There are more than 50 different learning styles. The following are the 4 main learning styles that have been identified by Honey & Mumford:
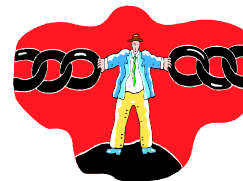

Activist: likes to be involved and learns best through the hands-on approach

Reflector: likes to collect data and think about it before coming to any conclusions
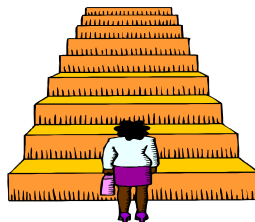
Theorist: likes to think problems through in a step by step way

Pragmatist: likes to see a link between the topic and job/task

Active Learners

Activists…

- Are open minded and enthusiastic about new ideas
- Enjoy doing things
- Like to be involved

Active learners learn more effectively when…

- They get involved in new experiences
- They work with others in groups and role play
- Chairing meetings and leading discussions

Active learners learn less effectively when…

- Listening to lectures
- Following precise instructions
- They are reading, writing or thinking on their own

Reflective Learners

Reflectors….

- Like to look at a situation from different perspectives
- Prefer to listen to the views of others before offering their own
- Think carefully before coming to a conclusion

Reflective learners learn more effectively when…

- They have had chance to think about what they have learned
- They have the opportunity to observe individuals or groups at work
- They produce work without deadlines to meet

Reflective learners learn less effectively when…

- They are performing in front of others
- They have no time to prepare

Theoretical Learners

Theorists…

- Are analytical rather than subjective in their thinking

- Like to think things through in a logical order

- Tend to be perfectionists

Theoretical Learners learn more effectively when…

- They have to use their skills and know how

- They have a clear purpose

- They are given the opportunity to question what they are learning

Theoretical Learners learn less effectively when…

- They have to express emotions and feelings (i.e. role play)

- Instructions are poor

Pragmatic Learners

Pragmatists…
- Like to try things out
- Can be impatient, practical and down to earth

Pragmatic learners learn most effectively when…
- They can try out techniques and get feedback
- Advantages of differing techniques are made obvious
- There is a link between what they are learning and the task in hand

Pragmatic learners learn less effectively when…
- They cannot see how they will benefit from what they are learning
- Learning is all 'theory'
- There are no instructions on how to do something

Other Learning Styles

Other learning styles include the VAK Learning Styles:

- Visual: Visual learners learn best through visual displays such as videos, hand outs and presentations. Visual learners often prefer to take detailed notes to absorb information

- Auditory: Auditory learners learn by listening and discussing. They use speech, tone of voice and pitch to interpret underlying meaning in what is being said

- Kinaesthetic: Kinaesthetic learners learn by doing activities. They find it hard to sit still for long periods and can be easily distracted by a need for activity and exploration

What is your learning style?

- As you may have gathered, we all learn in different ways. It's important to find the learning style that suits you and know what kind of learner you are

- Think about how you prefer to learn and try to apply this when learning new things

- There are lots of learning style questionnaires freely available on the Internet which will give you an indication of your preferred learning style. We've put links some on the next slide so you can have a go yourself

Learning Style Questionnaires

http://www.learning-styles-online.com/
Learning-Styles-Online provides free information to help you understand and use learning styles effectively

http://www.businessballs.com/freematerialsinword/vaklearningstylesquestionnaireselftest.doc
Business Balls is a free resource designed to help develop your learning and development. This is a link to their VAK learning styles questionnaire

http://www.acceleratedlearning.com/method/test_flash.html
Accelerated Learning have developed a range of programmes to develop the skills needed to absorb information and think creatively. Discover your learning style by working through their learning styles profile.

Further Reading

We have lots of books in the library about learning styles:

- *The learning styles questionnaire*. P. Honey. A. Mumford. 2000.

- *Learning to learn: assess your multiple intelligence and learning styles*. G. Burnett. Crown House, 2002. (CD-ROM)

- *Matching teaching to learning: a toolkit for self-evaluating teaching and learning styles*. J. Beresford. Optimus Publishing, 2005.

- *Study skills: do I really need this stuff?* S. Piscitelli. Pearson, 2004.